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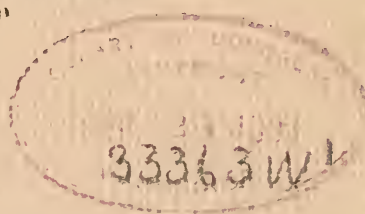
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GEMMÆ IMMORTALITATIS,

BY

ALSON M. DOAK.



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PRELUDE.

On Nature's quiet and gentle breast,
We cannot help but love the flowers
Which shine as jewels in earth's crown
To cheer these weary hearts of ours.

While seeking in the lap of Spring
The hidden store of Nature's fields,
I found among its thorns and weeds,
A gem such as she seldom yields.

It was a modest little flower
With quiet and unselfish air,
Yet with a beauty which outshone
By far, the vain and gaudy fair.

Its lips unsullied, sweet and pure,
Fit for no grosser stains than those .
Left by the dewdrop's pearly tear
Upon the petals of the rose.

An eye outshining from the heart
In liquid beauty, sent a thrill
Of tender love through all my frame
And with its brightness all did fill.

With charms like these that little flower
Gave its own sweetness to my life,
And with a holy purity
That calmed its discord and its strife.

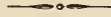
Would there were more such blossoms fair,
To lift man's ruder nature up,
So that from streams of pure life,
The cup of blessings he might sup.

So gently do earth's lovely flowers
Twine in with thoughts of higher birth,
That we can oft times scarcely tell
Which came from heaven, which from earth.

Earthly, and yet from heaven, the gem
That shed its light upon my road.
A treasure of immortal life,
Bearing the image of its God.

Thus sometimes on the darkened earth
We find a jewel sparkling bright,
Which by some strange, sweet spell, lifts up
Our sorrowing hearts to heavenly light.

TRUTH.



Standing beneath the sable dome of night,
I heard the trailing garments of a queen
Sweep through the silent, jeweled halls of heaven.
She was a queen in monarch Thought's domain,
Reigning in realms of the invisible.
And as I looked, there I beheld her hand
Holding within its graceful finger points
A pen made of materials richer
Than Ophir's fabled gold, whose jeweled point
She dipped into the crystal stream of life
Flowing from underneath the throne of God,
And I beheld in characters of light
Written upon those walls of changeless blue
In universal language for all men,
The message of the great Infinite One.
It was the queen of Truth, arrayed in robes
So pure that we can scarce detect her form
Unless it be in cloak humbler guise
Shining through things we every day behold.
Her head, bearing its cornet of gold,
Glittering with gems and precious stones,
Emblem of her great mission to mankind,
Waved its rich tresses on the scented air.

Her snowy bosom, on its silken robes
Which half consealed her beauteous grace of form,
Bore a rich shield, made brighter by the storm
Of fiery darts in hellish malice aimed
With vile intent to pierce that queenly heart,
But which by power invincible cast off,
Recoiled with double fury on the heads
Of those who dare to tempt the wrath of heaven.
Her feet were planted on the thunder clouds
Breathing their lightnings to destroy that one
Who should attempt her virtue to deride.
Not only on the starry face of night
Did she inscribe her missive to mankind,
But deep within the bosom of the earth,
And underneath the folds of Nature's robe,
Lies many a precious line by man unread.
In life, science, philosophy, written
In letters bright from life's pure crystal stream,
Although as yet but little understood,
That message comes with gentle yet resistless force.
And on she leads us to the great "First Cause;"
And from the pure and holy atmosphere
Of that high altitude we'll one day see
All nature stand a parable of Heaven.
Tell me, O lover, does your pulses thrill
At sight of beauty, virtue, purity?
Where is there being worthier of your love?
Do you admire the graceful form of youth?
Here stands a form in youth immortal dressed,

Though ancient as the everlasting hills,
Do you delight in faith and constancy,
She is as firm as adamantine rock
'Neath the Eternal city, and as sure.
Does love of gentleness o'erflow your soul,
E'en here you may drink in with tender joy
The magic sweetness of that matchless voice,
As she looks up through nature's smiling face,
And from the depths of true philosophy
Speaks to the erring heart of man, gently
Leading him to her feet to worship there.
Oh, that we all might be wedded to truth !
Let us arise and kiss her holy lips,
And plight to her eternal faith and love ;
Then we can lean upon her gentle breast,
And drink from everlasting springs of life ;
And she will lead us o'er the thorns and rocks
Which lies so thickly in the way of life,
And bring us to the holy hill of God
Whence we have wandered since that hapless fall
Which led us downward bound in error's chains.
Then by that law which makes the wedded one,
We shall again become the heirs of heaven ;
For Truth, our bride, offspring of God himself,
Will bring us as her wedding offering,
A joyous welcome to the gates of Life.

FRIENDSHIP.



True friendship is a shining golden chain,
The jeweled links of which were forged in heaven,
The jeweler enthroned as king of heaven,
His workmanship immortal as himself.
How firmly yet how gently are we bound,
Oh Friendship, by thy strong and lasting links,
Which bind true hearts in one, like giant vines
Which twine their iron tendrils each on each,
So that even the lightning's fiery bolts
Cannot assunder rend their strong embrace,
As through the rushing, thoughtless crowd, we tread
The cold and frozen highway of the world,
Chilled as by death, with the hard hand of care,
Oh, how the restless longing of the heart
Is stilled, as by the soft rich melody
Of heaven, when we can grasp with confidence
The warm and trusting hand of a true friend.
The soul which had withdrawn into itself
To keep it from the icy blasts of scorn,
Now opens like the gentle hyacinth
Which with the first warm touch of Spring, unfolds
Its tender petals to the chilling winds
Lading them with a rich, sweet fragrance.
Oh Friend, when the deep fulness of thy soul,

Breathing its nature's true nobility
Came into contact with my yearning life,
Changing from youthful follies to a mood
Of deeper thoughtfulness its fitful stream,
How gracious was that fellowship lifting
Nearer to the great universal heart,
The hopes and aspiration of my life.
At first the chain that bound was slight and frail,
Yet stronger forged by kindred thought and work,
It grew to such a beauty, strength and power,
That death alone could break its golden links,
Ah Death! is this the power of thy dark wave?
Has thy cold breath alone the power to rend
This glorious chain of heavenly workmanship?
And blast affection's sweet and holy flower?
It cannot be, for like the amaranth,
Immortal blooming by the throne of God,
It blooms in never-fading brilliancy.
And though the cruel storms of life and death
May hide it for a moment from the eye
Of cold, heartless and vain philosophy,
Yet when Life's Angel rolls them by, it will
In ever brightening glory shine; shedding
Celestial fragrance through the fields of light.

BEAUTY.

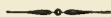
Within the whole of Nature's boundless realm,
With all her vast infinity of being,
Whether it be in forms inanimate
Moved but by the mysterious powers of force,
Or in the light and blithesome forms of life
Thrilled with an ecstasy of living fire
Kindled by life immortal self-contained,
No path can we traverse through all these forms,
But a sweet and charming spirit haunts our own,
Wooing us with the gentle purity
And fragrance of her virgin charms,
So mild, aerial, and spirit-like.
Whether we tread with light and joyous step,
The highway of a peaceful, happy life,
Or walk in sorrow's dark and misty vale
With its o'erhanging crags of misery,
Yet if we but spur our lagging faculties,
We can hear her light angelic step,
And the silvery music of her heaven tuned voice,
And feel the touch of her gentle spirit hand
As she pleads with us to leave deformity
And all her train behind us in our flight,
And come with her into a sweeter path,
A purer, more ethereal atmosphere.

This queen of beauty to the artist's eye
May lie in forms of loveliness and grace
As painted on the canvas folds o'er which
He has for many days in labor toiled.
Or it may lie in quiet forest shades
O'erspread with carpets delicate of moss
And sweet wild flowers, or in the laughing voice
Of babbling brook, pouring its limped waters pure
With soothing music o'er its pebbly bed,
And filling with their glory all his soul.
Unto the powerful intellect of him
Who points his telescope to heaven's blue dome,
And out into her vast infinitude
Rides on imagination's tireless wings,
It may exist in mighty magnitudes,
Sweeping with speed incomprehensible
Through space's deep abyss; or it may shine
In varied light from her unnumbered stars,
Breathing their silent, voiceless melody,
Through all her measureless expanse.
The mind of calm philosophy may see
It shine forth in the life of purity
Bearing its guise of meek sincerity;
Or in the heroism that will dare,
Endure and suffer, all of agony,
Even defy the powers of death and hell
To swerve it from the path of right or shake
Its boundless trust in God and in His truth.

Unto the ardent lover's watchful eye
It may exist in friendship's sacred fires,
Or sparkle in the radiant, trusting eye,
Lit with the calm and holy light of heaven,
Or in the graceful form, the glowing cheek,
The sweet and parted lips trembling in joy,
And with their gentleness and purity
Thrilling his soul with ecstasy of love.
But to the Christian's deeper soul it may
Be all of these and more. With what a bright
And radiant glory stands arrayed all things
'Neath beauty's magic touch when he goes forth
'Mid nature's charms in sweet communion with
Her God, and casting off all groveling fear
Listens to the beating of her great
And throbbing heart. She has for him a voice.
To other ears almost inaudible,
As if she would impress upon his heart
Some sweeter, purer token of her love
Into whatever part of her vast realm
We go to seek her wealth and treasures rich,
We find on all is written harmony.
And though through all her halls we hear no sound,
Yet in her voiceless eloquence she speaks,
And we yield to her a loving audience.
God sent his angel Beauty on the earth
To soften and refine the heart of man,
And melt it into sympathy with his

Own great and loving being, and to sing
In accents sweet the message wonderful
From Heaven, of "Peace, good-will to men."
We sometimes give to her a place and name,
Such as Nature, Woman or Art; yet we
Awake to find that we have given her
Too narrow boundaries. She lies not here;
But is an essence undefinable.
She reaches up with all pervading power
From the tender beauty of the slender flower
That childish hands may crush unwittingly,
Through varied forms in numbers infinite,
Up to that beauty undescribable,
The virtuous soul's unspotted purity
As it in robes of dazzling brightness stands
Arrayed before the throne of God.
Sometimes when we in thoughtful, serious mood,
Give up ourselves to contemplation's sway,
We seem to see this angel hold the keys of life.
With her alone perfection lies,
And in perfection immortality.
So let us yield our lives and all we are,
To beauty's angel and her holy light;
And when we cast away these fetters dull,
Which bind our spirits to a world of death,
We shall in ecstasy rise up to heaven
And lose ourselves in its pure element.

LOVE.



'Twas in a valley dark, and damp and cold,
A little flower once bloomed amid the storm.
Of structure delicate and sweet, richest
Of all the blossoms ever known on earth.
It was the pure sweet flower of human love,
The germ of which, matured in heaven was dropped
By angels hands from shining battlements ;
And, nurtured by the hand of God himself,
It grew to cheer the weary heart of man,
And lighten by its joy his heavy load,
So tender was that pure and fragrant flower,
So heavenly in its snowy purity,
That 'mid earth's cruelty and storm it seemed
As if its gentle life would be destroyed.
Its pure unsullied face in modesty
Was veiled, as upward into heaven's blue depths
It looked with mild and soulful eyes, seeking
To trace its lineage with the heavenly flower.
Its breath ever yielded a sweet perfume,
As budding forth among the thorns of earth,
It came a gracious messenger of peace,
Bidding earth's nations cease their cruel wars
And dwell together as all brethren should,
In bonds of peace and true humility.

Not sweeter fragrance does its petals yield,
Yet with what a delightful thrill it comes,
O'erflowing with a gracious sympathy
For every form of life the soul of him
Who stands enamored of the maiden's charms
Blooming from girlish grace and innocence
Into the charm of perfect womanhood.
How hast thou been profaned O holy flower,
By those who would apply thee to vile use!
From many of thy haunts thou hast been torn,
Where otherwise in beauty thou hadst grown,
And in thy place vile passion's flower has bloomed.
Yet still the faithful heart delights in thee,
And hails thee as the gift of God to man,
Purifying and refining all his soul.
Cold hearts may oft' deny the gentle power
Of love, yet they oft-times must feel its force.
Though not acknowledged, it in secret works;
If not for strong, courageous souls it burns,
yet for the weak and innocent, or foe
The delicate and beautiful it fills
The soul with pity or with sympathy.
And when the soul lifts up itself on high,
Breathing the purer, higher atmosphere
Of God and Heaven, it cannot help but love.

LIFE.

On one of those inspiring days in Spring,
When nature's gentle bosom, swelling with
Her love, was in the act of bursting forth
In all her beauty and her loveliness
From winter's dark and somber cloak, I sat
Upon an old oak's prostrate form, which lay
Stretched in a quiet, sunny hillside nook.
With powers of body and of mind relaxed,
I opened wide the windows of my soul
To nature's fresh and penetrating breath,
And lay passive and helpless in her hand.
As thus I rested from my menial toil,
And from the incongruous thoughts which had
Been rudely crowding in upon my mind,
Oh how invigorating was the change !
My soul was filled with those delightful sweets
Which nature always had possessed for me
Even from budding, days of infancy.
It seemed to me as if some "Tree of life"
Blooming in higher realms of spirit world,
Had downward sent its roots into my soul
And was through them drawing my being up
Into the tissues of its higher life,
As were the trees and plants about my path

Taking the crude materials of earth
Assimilating them to higher forms.
Here Nature in her generosity
Poured in her richest glories to my soul
With lavish hand, and that without a thought
Or effort of my weak exhausted powers.
And Ah! herein her magic sweetness lies,
The freshness and the fragrance of her teachings.
When tired of the affected teaching of
The moralist, we wander forth alone
Seeking to rest our weary faculties,
We need but to disrobe ourselves of all
Superfluous thoughts, and she will gently write
Upon the living tablets of the soul,
Essays of love, of truth, of purity.
As I looked upward from my rustic throne,
Above me stretched the great blue dome of heaven
Through which sailed here and there, white, fleecy
clouds,
Like flakes of foam upon the lake's smooth brim.
There too, in beauty was the sun like a
Laver of liquid gold in her blue depths.
Below me in the valley flowed the brook
Where many of my childhood days were spent.
It glided like a silver serpent through
The tangled grass which grew along its course,
Hiding a moment here and there, until
'Twas lost among the distant hills and woods.

The earlier birds of spring whistled and sang
Amid the clumps of bushes by the streams ;
And as their sweet and touching melody
Came floating to my ears in harmony
Upon the mild and balmy air of spring,
It seemed to carry me away with it,
And by its perfect purity of tone,
To purify my inmost thoughts and lift
My entire life, my soul nearer to heaven.
Whatever way I turned my eyes, was life.
I saw it, felt it coursing through my veins,
Yes! even heard it in the bursting buds
Struggling to come forth into loveliness.
It moved not only in the active world,
But I could see it in the sky above,
And even in the rocks beneath my feet
The same defineless spirit seemed to glow,
Bearing the stamp of immortality.
Even the air about me seemed to say :
The forest songster may forget his song ;
The world of vegetation may be parched ;
Even the earth itself may be destroyed ;
Yet this life spirit which pervades them all,
Cannot by the destroyer's power be harmed.
And as I sat there in the wood, drinking
Life's waters dipped for me by Nature's hand
In the silver goblet of human life,
I felt this thought imbedded in my soul

Firmly as fossils in the deep lain rocks
Dug up from hidden caverns of the earth :
This spirit of life is immortal born ;
And the human soul which is a part of this
Deep lain and all pervading life, shall, like
Its source, rise up as on the wings of light,
And lose itself in immortality.

AN ANGEL OF MERCY.

One day as the declining sun
Of June, with his absorbing rays
Which send through every rural nook
The spirit of those glorious days
Of freshness and of purity,
Shone down upon a city street,
His rays fell through her golden curls
Upon a childish face as sweet
And pure as ever heaven's light
Filled with a holy radiance bright.

A gentle mother's loving hand
Clasped tenderly the little one,
As 'mid the rush of hurrying feet,
Half aimlessly she hurried on.
Her form, in garb of mourning dressed,
Gave evidence of want and care.
And often did the burning tears
Fall on that little face so fair,
As that widowed mother, almost wild,
Stooped down to kiss her homeless child,

The door into a drinking house
She opened with a falt'ring hand
And with that darling little girl,
Before the bar I saw her stand
"Can you assist me sir?" she asked
Of him who dealt out poison there.
And answering his curious look
She said: I once was happy e'er
A fond and loving husband fell
Through weakness, to a drunkard's hell."

"I once possessed a happy home;
But now that home is desolate,
And gone the wealth which some called mine,
And I am left early and late
To wander with this little child,
My only friend, begging for bread;
For I am now too weak to work."
And she caressed those curls which spread
Their ringlets o'er that lovely face
Which seemed there strangely out of place.

And as the mother plead with those
Who sat about that room, to leave
Their evil ways, the little one
Pulling her flimsy, tattered sleeve,
Asked leave to sing to some of them.
"Yes darling if they wish, you may."
And as they placed her in a chair
And listened in an awkward way,
She sang to them in such a tone
As would have moved a heart of stone.

It was a plaintive, mournful song,
About a drunkard's homeless child;
And sung in sweet simplicity
From lips so innocent and mild,
It drew all hearts in sympathy
To listen to that pure, clear voice.
Billiards and cards were thrown aside,
And all came freely and from choice
To listen to so strange a sound
That could amid such sin be found.

The soft, sweet cadence of that voice,
The heavenly beauty of her face,
Brought back emotions to those hearts,
Which sin could ne'er again erase.
Those slender little arms, bathed in
A wealth of flowing golden hair ;
Those blue eyes filled with trusting light
Which seemed not of the earth so rare
It was, inspired each heart with strong
Resolve to leave the paths of wrong.

As that sweet melody was hushed,
Many a heart was moved to tears,
Which ran down over hardened cheeks
They had not known for many years.
One young man who had heartlessly
Resisted all a mother's love,
Grasping those tiny hands in his,
Exclaimed, as light dawned from above,
"God bless you, angel child ! you save
Me from a hopeless drunkard's grave."

"If ever angels were on earth,
God bless you darling, you are one!"
And placing in the mother's hand
A bill, he said : " Your child has done
For me more than wealth can e're repay.
Accept this trifle from my hand,
And come to me in every day
Of need, and you will find a friend."
But the mother and child were gone,
Those drinking men were left alone.

Stepping forward the owner said :
"My friends if you hereafter drink
It will not be in house of mine.
I cannot bear to think how much
Of ruin I have wrought." And one
By one before they could depart,
They were constrained to pledge themselves
To better life ; feeling in heart,
Truly an angel had been that day
Leading them into the better way.



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